



# KEY NOTE



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**SUBS**  
Cheques etc. to FISTS C.W. CLUB.  
N. America to WZ8C, others to HQ.  
UK: £5, EEC: £6, Europe: £7  
N. America: \$15.00. others: £10.  
**LISTS**  
Call v Name/Number: Stamp plus SAE.  
**CLUB BADGES: £1.50**

**NETS**  
Sunday :0930 & 1430 on 7029. G0IHK  
Sunday US: 2000Z on 14.058 KC4UUG  
Saturday US: 1500Z on 14.058 NP2GP  
DX 7/14/21/28.058 on the hour for 15mins  
Pse keep watch all Novice allocations  
UK Net Controls use GX0IPX/P

## Listings

Up-dated listings may be obtained from N8IAG. Pse send SASE.

## NA FISTS QSL BURO

N. A. QSL Manager : N8FU - John Hugentober , 4441  
Andreas Ave , Cincinnati, OH 45211. Pse SASE

## SUBS

Your renewal date is printed on your mailing label.

## GREETINGS

Greetings people. Once again the festive season is upon us and with it the accompanying chaos of near non-existent postal services from mid December to early Jan. As is normal at this period, your next Key-note will be in January 95 for JAN/FEB.

My thanks to those who have sent cards for the season. I am sure you will forgive me but due to the current situation with Ivy, it is not possible for me to respond to all but a handful of these. It was indeed Ivy who, in previous years, signed hundreds of greetings cards and stuffed 'em with the Keynote into envelopes. Amongst the cards received is one depicting three characters with shepherds crooks and despite their strange clothing, the sender interprets the scene as three QRPers complete with mobile verticals looking for some place to plant 'em. I like it.

Some despicable character with the mentality of an Orang Utan has been heard slanging DL stations in general using a fictitious callsign. The information arrives via one of our members who wisely prefers anonymity to avoid any chances of repercussions. Someone who behaves in this manner on the air is unlikely to stop short of taking criminal action against him. This could be the same nerk who has been causing Angie much grief by using her call to issue some outrageous statements. Her tormentor appears to be using separates since the netting is nigh on perfect and it has reached such a pitch that she finds it difficult to persuade her regular contacts to indulge in a QSO. The odds of such tulips turning up in the Amateur fra-

temity are no less than in any other walk of life I guess but it would be sweet fruit indeed if they were to be "collared".

I am sorry folks but the response to FIST of the year was pathetic. Only a handful of stations took the trouble to make a nomination and none of them were duplicated. Certificates have gone to those who were noted indicating that they were included in the list of nominations. I hope we can do better than this in '95.

Taking the bus to town the other day I spied amongst the ubiquitous advertisements an official notice demanding that OAPs (Senior Citizens) show their pass to the driver. It was inevitable I suppose that some wit had gone to work with correcting fluid and removed the "P".

The W3DZZ broke again. Here is a salutary lesson. When re-routed, my tame monkey inadvertently left a kink in the outward leg and after a couple of weeks it broke at this point. I had to wait a week to get him back and he repaired the damage with a choc block connector. This lasted about two weeks again so this time I sent him up aloft with a screw, a couple of washers and a nut with instructions to wrap both ends round the screw sandwiched with the washers and tighten it up. This would have been great but I forgot to tell him to scrape the ends before doing this and it is no longer resonant on 40m without the ATU. Still, I am getting out and waiting now for one of our club members to re-make the joint and solder it.

## DIT DIT

"It is by no means uncommon to hear a simple 'dit dit' sent at the conclusion of a cw QSO on today's Amateur bands. I wonder if this practice may have its origins in the days of WWII". Eric McFarland, G3GMM speculates on this question and - as myself and others have oft pointed out - dit dit was never a part of service procedure. During early morning watches, operators were required to exchange QSA at frequent intervals (gotta make sure they're still awake!) and rather than call the other station to exchange signal reports, an unofficial exchange often took place which took the form of an exchange of dit dit. In the case of no response, the official c/s v c/s INT QSA K was used

but otherwise, all was well, the channel clear and signals readable.

A further case was cited when, after sending the final message of a batch, the sending station would sign with AR. The receiving station would respond with R dit dit as a shortened acknowledgement rather than the official c/s v c/s R AR.

In my own experience the only occasion when dit dit would be tolerated was when accepting traffic from merchant vessels who were free of the constraints of service procedure and even then a c/s de c/s QSL (dtg) dit dit (were it to be monitored by the duty comms officer) would generate a glare askance at least. DTG incidentally is a unique group of digits representing date and time.

Frankly, I and most other hams, use dit dit as the natural termination to a musical phrase. VA on it's own is oddly empty and seems to demand something to finish it off. In fact, dit dit after almost anything seems to provide a natural and musical termination and OTs generally tend to use it as a terminal signal - TNKS CHAS CUL dit dit. In contest work, dit dit is a quick acknowledgement before moving on and I have heard traffic handlers signing NRU dit dit.

Each "fist" on a straight key has it's own characteristic and can frequently be recognised even in the absence of a call. Exaggerated styles however were not encouraged in the services and perpetrators would find themselves on the carpet.

After all this though please remember that the name of the game is AMATEUR radio and since we are free of strict service type procedures, we are also free to produce music where there would otherwise be cacaphony. How often have you heard "He's got a beautiful swing" ?. That "swing" would never have been tolerated under a services regime but you have to admit - it's wonderful to listen to.

## THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

In between laying radials, Angie took time out to pen a complaint about the closure of **GB2SM** seeing this a threat not only to Morse but to Amateur Radio generally. The reply (from some obscure hand) thanked her for her letter to Sir Austin Pearce though she suspects that it went straight into his waste bin and contained the following. "In the space currently occupied by the Radio Room we shall be opening next year a hands-on-radio studio in which visitors can make and broadcast their own programmes". Also, "The studio will, we hope, engender and encourage an interest in developing technical expertise in the broad area of communications and electronics. In addition, Radio communications will continue to be displayed in the Museum's galleries and we have an active collecting policy in contemporary communication technologies". I'm beginning to get worried! "In this situation, we have to take difficult decisions about the proportion of our floor space that is devoted to each topic. When we open our new radio facilities next year, we shall have

increased the space we are devoting to this branch of technology." If they are intending to have more floor space then why kill off **GB2SM**. These people are telling porkies.

## KG8DA

Seeing a Mexican stamp on the letter I donned my sarapi to find an intro from George. He is still waiting for his first FISTS QSO (apart from his sponsor **N3IJR**) but his work schedule does not afford much operating time. He only manages to reach his Ohio QTH every 4 or 5 years and in the meantime, he teaches Bible and agronomy (that sounds painful) at a small school in Mexico. It took months to get an operating permit for Mexico for despite guidance from the ARRL etc., every official in Mexico seems to have a personal set of rules which are unique. T'would seem there is little cw activity from the country and not even the federal examiners there are equipped or able to administer a cw exam. Currently, all cw testing is done on paper (there's a thing) but he is involved with the local club per Federacion Mexicana de Radio Experimentores and is actively encouraging the members to use cw with practice tapes in spanish etc. Only four club members currently has a pukkah ham rig - the majority being converted CB stuff - and he is now looking into the availability of inexpensive QRP kits. Hope you get this one off the ground George and he will be found operating as **XE1/KG8DA** whenever opportunity presents itself.

## Morseman

In MM, Gary Bold's First Morse Theorem is described:

"Every cw Ham has a preferred range of speeds outside of which he rarely operates or listens. The maximum and minimum speeds are in the ratio 2:1".

Explanation: If you can readily copy 20 wpm you will almost never listen to stations outside the speed range 10-30 wpm... This is completely subconscious. The reason for the upper limit is current ability. The lower limit is more interesting. I've heard QRQ operators, after tuning over the cw section of a band populated by a few slow, hesitant beginners, announce 'the band is empty tonight'.

It seems that to them, code beneath the lower speed limit may not even be 'noticed' as Morse. Some tell me they even have difficulty reading slow Morse! So if a high-speed type doesn't come back to your careful 12 wpm answer to his CQ, maybe you're NOT being snubbed, maybe you just 'were not perceived'. Maybe someone will do a psychological study of this some day.

Bold's Second Morse Theorem:

'As operating experience grows, cw operators progressively underestimate their sending speed'.

Explanation: This is quite subconscious. 'I called CQ at about 12wpm on 80 last night hoping to talk to some

new Hams but nobody answered'. I had in fact heard him; but he was actually sending at nearly 20 wpm as measured by my code reading software.

He found this hard to believe, and was astonished when I sent him some 'true' 12 wpm. So if you really want to give a newcomer some practice, please check your speed. Twelve words per minute is five dots per second. Set your keyer with a stopwatch.

Both the above from 'The Morseman' column by Gary Bold, **ZL1AN**, in Break-In, journal of NZART, June/July 1987.

Gary's observations were made as you can see many years ago but they are still valid. If I wish to send at 12 wpm it is easy for me because I have one of those keyers which permit me to dial in a speed. However, I can make a pretty good guess by changing speed up or down in 2 wpm increments unless I have been previously working at 30 wpm or greater. Under these circumstances, I find myself belting away at 18 wpm. An earlier (**G3KHZ**) keyer was lacking the sophistication of the Contester and it was this keyer which was used for slow Morse broadcasts. I got around this problem by installing a small rotary switch connecting banks of fixed resistors to give me pre-set speeds of 12, 15, 18 and 20 wpm.

## THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

**G4NXN**. Terry voices his appreciation of the mention of G-QRP club in Keynote. He operates QRP only (3 watts max) so you will likely find him within the prescribed frequencies. Incidentally, this is one of the reasons that net QRGs are up where they are just LF of QRP so the rock-bound can pull their crystals a little.

**G4KLF**. A provisional report on the Gambia DX-pedition from Tony who reports a single QSO on 6m with IT9CHU. South Africa was heard on that band but no joy despite sporting 85 watts with a 2 ele **HB9CV** at 25 feet. He recalls a pile up on top band with wall-to-wall cw and most sigs 599+. Interestingly, he has shorted out the coax lead to his R5 vertical and tuned as a LW with excellent results on 80 thru 30m. That's great I guess as long as the vert isn't ground mounted though even then I guess there's always the possibility of introducing some height by routing the feeder up and about. **G3WGL**. Nolly got some stick from the boss following my revelations last month. "If you are gonna have a proper photograph taken and pay money for it then clear that tip up". Hmm, that's got a familiar ring. The aforesaid QSL card was shown to the wife of a friend who had letters and degrees up to his armpits. Her comment "My goodness, isn't it neat and tidy and he looks quite intelligent. I always thought your Amateur friends were those bobble hatted weirdos". For HQ read **G3ZQS**. **G3VOO**. Les writes on his return from VE3 where he spent a lotta time visiting relative (19 living in the Toronto area). Helen **VE3PUA** offered guidance to find a Ham Shop where he found selection awesome and prices lower than the UK. Yes I was also disgruntled with the Canadian habit of slapping

Federal and Provincial tax on everything but found it too much trouble to reclaim the wads of bills for Tea, Nosh and Booze. If you are gonna buy a TS960 then it is worth reclaiming but by the time you pay import duty Les, I wonder if it's gonna be worth it. Hi. **G4WBN**. In the course of converting the station to "contest" standard, Trevor has added a 40m dipole to the growing nest each one of which has been optimised for a specific frequency. During this process, the ATU came under scrutiny and despite all possible configurations he discovered that for 5w in on 40m he claimed 2.5w out and this was by no means the worst band. He spent a day building another ATU but this time NOT a switched band type which has restored the ideal of 1-1 ratio twist in and out power. **G3PEN**. Dave was running a stand at the QRP convention but I didn't spot the FISTS badge or he didn't spot my lid. He has copies of Radcomm back to 1939 with a few gaps through 1947 and "solid" except for some indexes and loose extras from mid-47 to date. Noting the cost of the RSGB service he offers photocopying at 10p per sheet from his local print shop for any members needing such. Pse not to forget return postage. VMT Dave. For cw practice, he uses a couple of sheets of clear plastic with alphabet and numerals regularly spaced. By overlaying 'em you can make up countless 5-letter groups though he also uses my old ploy of quoting from classic poets where archaic words defy guessology. The re-order desc on my toner cartridge is 92275a (HP IIIP). **GW0SXZ**. Jim notes that if you tie a monkey to a piano then at some time he is bound to play Chopin. Lots of help in reaching test standards but thereafter on you are "on your own". Only the motivated will continue after the test - not always true Jim. Ask **G13PZU**. **G4YNU**. John clips a loading coils to each end of his antenna when on 160m. Great stuff John especially when it's coming down in stair rods. Hi. **G4GFQ**. Yes tnks Ron. Ivy firing on all cylinders with the odd miss but permanently stuck in bottom gear. **G0DEB**. New QTH for Dave with 120 feet of garden and 40 feet of yard space available. When you get your radials down mate, cover the whole damned schebang with wood chips or gravel and you won't need to get the mower out quite so often. Hi. **G0AIV**. Alf returns to Daventry for the winter having secured the caravan after a super summer in Somerset. Nary a single salmon this year though. Plans for better ant next year as he is currently restricted to 20m at the van but 15w turns up lenty of JAs. Grand children keeping Alf and Margaret young and Sarah in particulr (now sans tonsils) is vy much QRO. **G4PSI**. George landed in Normandy on D day and fought through the NW European campaign unscathed. Returned recently for the 50th Anniversary and was backed into by a reversing French bus (unharmd) but later that day tripped over a kerb in Arromanches and split open his head (claims he was stone cold sober). Says he can now relate to his Grand Children how he spilled his blood in the streets of France. Mon Dieu.

## FROM ACROSS THE POND

The US news letter is getting bigger and bigger. It includes everything in Keynote of course (even the header) but Nancy opens out the leading and shuns reduced type faces in addition to adding several pages which are NA oriented. The latest one came to a whopping 12 pages and this time is devoid of the offset which rather spoiled the previous issue.

Joe's QRP Corner is enlightening and he has recently formed a club called the One-A-Day CW Radio Club, the purpose of which can be divined by the name. He plans an award for working one CW contact each day throughout a full year, working all states one each day and DXCC for no more than one contact each day. Sounds fun.

Roger, **WB0JNR** is Certs Manager for the Earth Friendly Technologies QRP Low Power Award. This attractive award on heavy green paper (what else?) is earned for contacts over 100 km distant using less than one watt and no artificial means of active relays. His address is PO Box 460101, Aurora, CO 80046-0101 and claims to be accompanied by \$4.00 US. Dunno if any arrangements are in place for non-US claims.

**N3EYM** is appointed East Penn area coordinator for the Navy/Marine corps (MARS) and in addition to his regular on-air activities as NC and RTTY/HF Packet and Amtor Traffic Rep, he now has administrative duties.

An impromptu sket twxt **WO8E** and **KC4OCS** (thurs on 30m) is also turning into a QSO party. Try 10.117 at 0100z.

I like the quote from **KR4VQ**, Carlos "I will compare a good cw operator to a soloist mastering his musical instrument". He shares the opinion of many including myself that CW is music to the ears.

George, **N2CG** retired from the US Coast Guard as a Senior Chief Radioman. In the Sept issue of the Coast Guard Reservist mag, he read that effective 1 Oct, the USCG will change the title Radioman to Telecommunications Specialist. This change say the USCG, more accurately reflects the job of the members. Last year they quit using cw on 500KHz, now this! What next? ponders George.

It is a bit too much to reprint but Bill, **KJ6GR** details his employment of Cho-Sorb beads on co-ax lines and baluns to kill RF at the fundamentals and harmonics. All this because of an overly long shack-to-ground lead but up to press he has had no complaints of TVI.

### Delayed Elmers

There are a few Elmers waiting for processing for Amateurs who have devoted time and often equipment to the cause of bringing on potential hams. The club abounds with such characters such as Christine, **G0SZE** who continues her nightly slow transmissions and has thus far guided 8 of her pupils to a full ticket. I have been held up for a week or so with the awards

because of my endeavours to upgrade the computer. A 18,000 baud fax-modem card was projected as also was a CD ROM and additional hard drive capacity. Ernie and I lugged the brute up to a dealer asking him to do the necessary but it turned out that the BIOS was exhibiting rejection syndromes and refused to slave the new hard drive. I had a good think about this and decided that it would be better to upgrade to a 486 computer and flog the old one and although I now have the lot installed, the modem will have to wait due to a location problem. We'll get there in the end. For this reason also, some QSL cards have had to be held over pending completion of this letter. My apologies to those who are waiting.

### NEW MEMBERS

The following new members should be included on your lists:

G10GVG	Andy	G0SBH	Ted	G10PUZ	Irene
G0PEH	Tony	TF3DX	Villi	HE9VIZ	Nicola
G4XWV	Mat	G3RGE	Ken	G3HEL	Jack

The above, reading L/R are numbered from 1654 and an additional NA member noted in the NA Memo is **WB4WNO** Steve (1517)

### THE NA MEMO

I was delighted to receive the US Keynote together with Nancy's own notes in NA MEMO from which I extract:

**N2PLE** (Cliff) offers advice for learners and tutors noting that he is only 65 years of age and has another 100 years or so before he learns to keep his mouth shut. Brian (**K9VKY**) is huntin' ex-military gear for installation into the submarine Requin. I know that he is a stickler for authenticity and felt on my visit that he would be happier with some pukkah kit to play with in the radio office than the ham gear (albeit museum quality) that was then wired in. I learn of the existence of a club for serving and ex members of the US Coast Guard being organised by **AD4PT** and currently boasts no less than 207 members. Another member casting back the years is **N2NTO**. Bob would like to hear from members who were in the army school for cw back in 1959 at Fort Dix. **WA0FGV** surrounded by tourists, operated from atop Crazy Horse Mountain with a special event station. Trust the natives were not restless Jiggs. **VE7ERA** (Olive) has had an extremely busy year following the publication of her book. She attended a library tea in her honour and has been the subject of interviews on Canadian radio shows. **NU6Q**, Pete, regrets he can spend little time with FISTS activities since his assignment with FEMA working on the Loma Prieta earthquake recover effort (San Francisco) and daily two hour commuting makes him a very busy fellow. **KR4VQ** has strung up a dipole in his living room in order to join in the QSO parties. **N9JIY** has been evaluating the Insect Filter on the t'other side of the pond and Mike seems just as enthusiastic about it's poten-

tial as I was. Joe, **AA8HV**, has now amassed all the necessary bits 'n pieces to assemble the single valve QRP TX from CQ (Oct 94). The bottle costs \$3 (US) and the whole schebang is virtually breadboarded on a piece of pine.

### FINALE

Now that the season is upon us and white-bearded red-cloaked gents are muttering Ho Ho Ho from the hidden sanctums of most department stores, some of us will shed a tear for our stolen childhood. How nice it would be to sit upon some scarlet draped lap and whisper through all that genuine imitation plastic facial growth "Santa - I would like a TS960, a super keyer and a 6 ele multi band beam for Christmas".

If it is at all possible, I would love to find a little time to get on the air particularly on Christmas day. There is something rather special about this occasion which defies definition. Everyone is on their best behaviour, code is largely much improved over the norm (excepting those who's fist has been impaired by over-indulgence) and all have nice things to say. We have little breathing space twixt then and and the time when hammering and curses are heard as people remove the calendar from the back of the door and endeavour to replace it with next years model. Odd how that the drawing pin always manages to bend and your efforts to persuade it to serve yet another year's duty with the aid of a two pound lump hammer result in little more than a conspicuous dent and falling plaster in the house next door.

Have a super Christmas my friends and for the majority of us enjoying peace and stability, spare a thought for those in Bosnia and much of Africa.

Again my apologies for the lateness of this particular publication. As things turned out, even without the complication of Bob's absence, things would have been difficult. The new computer has been a pig to tame and I have had to spend far too much time messing around with it than would have otherwise been desirable. However, I'm sure we will muddle through somehow. The published list of new members has been augmented and will be updated next month. We also have the problem of approaching Christmas and as usual, in view of the diminished postal services, December will be a no-no. We are still however getting at least 10 news letters out each year which can't be bad. With hopefully a little more time on my hands, I shall be looking forward to spending some time on the air

Have fun people, 73/88 es stay sober  
de Geo **G3ZQS**

### Condolences

Our sympathy to Aubrey **KB0ZE** on the loss of his wife, after a long illness. Also to Pete **K8OUA** and his daughter Sara **KB8RHG** on the passing of Petes dad and Saras grandfather.

## NORTH AMERICAN MEMO



by **WZ8C - Ms. Nancy Kott**  
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Happy Holidays NA FISTS! There has been a small glitch in the communication between Geo and me in regard to the Dec/Jan/Feb issues...He phoned me on the landline to extract a promise that I would combine the Dec/Jan issues of the Keynote. That was the game plan across the pond and there is some unrest among the Brits since they are slowly realizing that WE have a expanded Keynote. Geo was concerned about a revolt if we had a separate issue for each month and the word got out. SO, to keep peace in the family, I agreed to combine the Dec/Jan issues.

Now, I read in this months Keynote that he is combining the Jan/Feb issues instead! Well, I am not sure how this will all work out, but I assure you that any newsletter I get from across the pond, I will get out to you ASAP, and you wont miss an issue. It never fails that hams, who are supposed to be the worlds best communicators often have the most misdirected info!!

There are many things to cover in this issue, some of them political, which may go against the grain of some, but please give it a read, and respond! Your opinion as a member of FISTS is so very important. I am also striving to include an updated membership list (MERRY CHRISTMAS, hi) and Century Award checksheet and calendar for January. This bulk mail is a wonderful thing, I can include up to a pound of info without exceeding the 20 cent price!

Speaking of the bulk mail, I have been doing random checks to see how the delivery time compared to first class mail. We figured out if you dont have a ZIP - plus four on the envelope, it can be delayed for weeks! SO PLEASE, if I dont have your zip plus 4, call your post office, find it out and lemme know! So, with that being said, please join me in welcoming the new FISTS

## Welcome New FISTS

1518 **KE8UM** Murray from Michigan enjoys travel and train rides and was sponsored by **WZ8C**.

1519 **KD4D** Mark, sponsored by **G3ZQS** lives in MD and enjoys contesting.

1520 **VP9NC** or **KA3CAA** Jeff, sponsored by **WB2FXK** lives in Bermuda and uses a Yaesu FT-840.

1521 **W6OLD** Dick in Nevada, sponsored by **WZ8C** via CompuServe is a flight instructor and enjoys on-line computer networks.

1522 **KB1AXF** Wil in New Hampshire also found out about FISTS from **WZ8C** via CompuServe. He enjoys music, photography, and squash.

1523 **KB8OHF** Tim from Ohio is another new FISTS sponsored by **WZ8C** via CompuServe. He is attending night school to get his PhD. in Aeronautical Engineering.

1524 **KA3WMJ** Ken in PA enjoys sailing, bicycle riding and traveling and found FISTS thru **WZ8C** on CServe.

1525 **W6DDB** Bill in CA, has a call you might recognize from the Bills Basics column in CQ magazine!

1526 **WZ8O** Dick in Texas found FISTS in a World Radio ad. He likes trailering, bicycling and reading.

1527 **W8MVN** Ernie, sponsored by **WZ8C** lives in OH and lists contests, camping, golfing, photography, woodworking, antenna design, and QRP DX-ing as his other interests.

1528 **K6ZAN** Ralph in CA, sponsored by **WE6V** plays folk guitar, enjoys church activities, reading, bicycling, and building homebrew and kits.

1529 **KA2OYF** Barry in CA saw info about FISTS on his local BBS. He is interested in getting a Novice net started, he needs help with his CW badly! You aren't the only one interested in a slow speed net Barry, look for more info on that further on in the Memo.

1530 **KC7FII** Steve in WA, sponsored by **WZ8C** via CServe builds homebrew rigs, designs and builds antennas and enjoys computers.

1531 **KN4OA** Wil from Tennessee sponsored by **NP2GP** says he has no other interests, just radio, hi!

1532 **AA6WG** Joe in CA is setting up a portable station in his van, building portable antennas like his 4 element quad and is looking for new high ground locations to transmit from. He is also studying to be a physician assistant.

1533 **N1QLF** Margie, sponsored by **N2LDK**, lives in CT, plays the drums, writes stories and poems and collects frogs and pen pals.

1534 **KC5DUI** Bob in AR, is another new FISTS via **WZ8C**/CompuServe! He is active with the Boy Scouts and enjoys computers.

1535 **NV1X** Bob in Vermont sponsored by **WZ8C** enjoys restoring classic equipment.

1536 **N1QWM** Fred in Maine also sponsored by **WZ8C** via CompuServe, enjoys packet radio and computers

1537 **WN8MWM** Scott in Ohio is sponsored by **WB2FXK** enjoys computers, music, baseball, basketball and soccer.

1538 **KB2QLK** George from New York is sponsored by **N1QLF** enjoys SWL-ing, & Country/Western music

1539 **AD4SB** Bob in VA, also sponsored by **WB2FXK**  
1540 **NW8X** Rich, from Ohio is sponsored by **AD4PT** enjoys classical music and bicycling.

1541 **AD4VL** Jim from Florida sponsored by **WB2FXK** enjoys playing tennis when he isn't on the air.

1542 **VE3UOL** David in Dunrobin Ontario found out about FISTS from a posting on Internet by talk show host **Len Winkler**! Thanks Len!

Thanks to everyone who has been spreading the FISTS word! I am impressed at the number of CompuServe members we have. I have recently been appointed the SysOp for the CW section of the HamNet. The boss, Scott, says we can use it to post FISTS stuff as long as we don't talk business!

## Lance Johnson, where R U?

I have had a couple inquiries asking if I had heard any news about the Lance Johnson Company, manufacturer/distributor of the Kansas City Keyer. Joe **AA6WG** has written to Lance Johnson, even including SASEs, over a 6 month period with absolutely no response. Does anyone have any info about this? Is he out of business? Please drop me a note & I'll share the news.

## FISTS LOGO MUGS

The mugs have arrived at Joe **AA8HV**'s QTH! Instead of being sky blue, as first reported, they are actually a BEAUTIFUL cobalt blue: almost navy blue, but not quite that dark. It shows off the gold FISTS logo perfectly, and looks very classy and rich. The logo is on the mug twice, so both you and a visitor can see it as you sip your favorite beverage! One note: don't put this mug in the microwave, as the metal used in the logo may cause sparks. They are available from Joe **AA8HV** 9614 Arden Ave, Livonia MI 48150. Cost is \$3.00 per mug plus \$3.00 shipping and .50 for the box, total of **\$6.50** shipped UPS or 1st class.

## Thank You, Worldradio

Last month I mentioned that **AA8HV** contacted World Radio to convince them that they need to reinstate their monthly CW column. They agreed with Joe and soon re-start their monthly CW column written by the same OM who wrote it previously, Mike Cafferky **AA6WQ**.

Apparently Mike had taken a leave of absence to write a book. We look forward to reading the CW column again, and many thanks to Joe for looking into this!

## STICKERS

Don't forget that the gold FISTS logo stickers are still available at \$5 for 200 postpaid, and I still have a few copies of The Art & Skill of Telegraphy for \$10 pp. And blue enamel logo lapel pins for \$3.50 post paid.

## Traffic DeMystified Continued

I recently read a short piece in "World Radio" that kind of bothered me a bit. In the October issue of that magazine, in the Traffic column, there's a paragraph describing the death of cw traffic nets, noting that as current hounds age and pass on, few younger ops come in to replace them. The article cites a number of cw nets that have passed out of existence, and others that are in a bit of trouble, suffering from decreased check-ins and an aging population of participants. We've had a lot of gloom and doom about the future of cw in this newsletter lately, and I guess I'm one of those who is not the most optimistic about the future of either cw or, in fact, the hobby itself. Still, I don't believe in going down without making an effort, and that is one of the reasons I agreed to try to spread the word about the joys of cw traffic handling. In the of this series of articles I gave my reasons for my belief that cw traffic nets are viable, fast, accurate, and, most importantly, fun ways of conveying information from one place to another. I recently registered with the Ohio Single Sideband Net, and have checked in a few times. While I admire that group for the work they do, and they do handle much more traffic than do the Ohio cw nets, the fact is that, for me at least, it just ain't as much fun handling traffic on a sideband net as it is on a cw net! As for packet, well, one of the nice things about ham radio is the people you meet and the interaction that occurs between stations. I just don't get that from packet. Don't get me wrong, I marvel at the technology, am amazed at the amount of traffic that packet can handle, and I use it myself for many purposes, I just don't enjoy talking to computers that much. Still, I'm obviously in the minority, and I think my ideas need pushed for them to survive. I also think that I'm preaching to the converted, because if you belong to FISTS you obviously either enjoy cw or would like to enjoy cw more. Our group is the one that should be in the forefront of encouraging the use of cw, not only for ragchewing, but for all purposes, including traffic handling. So, once again, I am encouraging you to QNI into one of your cw traffic nets, to do your bit to keep cw traffic handling alive and flourishing. Frankly, if WE don't do it no one else will, and if no one works to keep the cw nets alive we'll be watching another traditional amateur activity disappear. And it will be a sad day if that is allowed to occur. So, do your bit now! 'Nuff said on that!

As one of the many shortcuts to cw operation on traffic nets, numbered radio-grams are in common use. These are also used for ssb traffic, and they are always spelled out, never written in number form, whether on cw or ssb. These are preceded by the letters ARL, and are sent as, for example, ARL FIFTY, which translates to "Greetings by amateur radio." In the preamble of the message the check for a message that contains one or more of these numbered radiograms will have ARL (number) as the check. In other words, if you are sending a message with a numbered radio-

gram as part of the text, and which has a check of twelve, the check would be sent as "ARL 12". It is probably obvious that when delivering a message with one of these numbered radiograms in it you always translate the radiogram, never delivering it to the addressee as "ARL FIFTY", but always as "Greetings by amateur radio" instead. I have listed the routine messages that you are likely to meet in day to day traffic handling. There are many more that are used for emergency or priority traffic, but unless you are operating in an emergency situation, you are not likely to run into these.

**ARRL NUMBERED RADIOGRAMS — ROUTINE MESSAGES FORTY SIX** — Greetings on your birthday and best wishes for many more to come. **FIFTY** — Greetings by amateur radio. **FIFTY ONE** — Greetings by amateur radio. This message is sent as a free public service by ham radio operators here at ——. Am having a wonderful time. **FIFTY TWO** — Really enjoyed being with you. Looking forward to getting together again. **FIFTY THREE** — Received your ——. It's appreciated: many thanks. **FIFTY FOUR** — Many thanks for your good wishes. **FIFTY FIVE** — Good news is always welcome. Very delighted to hear about yours. **FIFTY SIX** — Congratulations on your —, a most worthy and deserved achievement. **FIFTY SEVEN** — Wish we could be together. **FIFTY EIGHT** — Have a wonderful time. Let us know when you return. **FIFTY NINE** — Congratulations on the new arrival. Hope mother and child are well. **SIXTY** — Wishing you the best of everything on —. (used for any holiday) **SIXTY ONE** — Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. **SIXTY TWO** — Greetings and best wishes to you for a pleasant — holiday season. (used for any holiday) **SIXTY THREE** — Victory or defeat, our best wishes are with you. Hope you win. **SIXTY FOUR** — Arrived safely at —. **SIXTY FIVE** — Arriving — on —. Please arrange to meet me there. **SIXTY SIX** — DX QSLs are on hand for you at the — QSL Bureau. Send —self addressed envelopes. **SIXTY SEVEN** — Your message number — undeliverable because of —. Please advise. **SIXTY EIGHT** — Sorry to hear you are ill. Best wishes for a speedy recovery.

These numbered radiograms obviously simplify the handling of traffic. It is interesting to note that they are used for ssb as well as cw, even though they originated to make cw traffic easier to handle. Another of the many examples of the way cw has shaped our hobby. Isn't it strange that so many people would throw away the roots of the world's greatest hobby essentially for a bowl of porridge. Take care, drop me a message, and I really look forward to seeing you on the air soon.

73 es ARF — Pete **K8OUA**

## NEW KEY and KEYSER PADDLE

Charlie **KA8OQF** sent me a flyer about a straight key and a keyer paddle from WBL Design. The maker is Stan **W9WBL**, and Charlie says he does a fabulous job.



The straight key is called The Sidekey and features solid gold contacts, fabricated from W.E. Alloy #1, 69% silver and 6% platinum; 1.1 pound steel weight; contact base of 1/2" thick, clear Lexan; solid brass posts, contact screws, and lever bar; easily adjustable contact spacing and adjustable spring force can be "tweaked" while sending; dual ball bearing pivot and gold plated phono jack output. The price, including shipping is \$59. It comes in a right or left hand model.

The VSL X3 is a vertical single lever three way key-er paddle. It features the same gold contacts and contact base, and brass posts etc as the Sidekey. It has precision spring assemblies, easily adjustable from 1/2 to 2 1/2 oz. and easily adjustable contact spacing and spring forces tweakable while sending". It has a small foot print, only 2 1/2 x 3 1/2 in the vertical mode with 2.2 pounds of steel weights directly over the key feet for maximum walk resistance. It claims to be capable of speeds over 50 WPM in experienced hands. The feature I found interesting is the adjustable finger height - it pivots up and down for high or low fingering and also goes horizontal for bug-style fingering. This paddle costs \$89 plus shipping.

For more info, or a brochure with photos of the keys send an SASE to WBL Design, 6345 Coffman Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46268-2591. They also have an 1-800 number, 726-8936. They promised to have my new straight key to me by SKN, so if you hear me, let me know how it sounds!

These two can be combined into one key/paddle combo. In fact, this was Charlies idea, so he has serial number 1!

## FEEDBACK

While talking about Charlie, this might be a good place to place his FEEDBACK to I.M. Lumpys comments in the November Keynote!

Lump, ol boy, the name of the game is Amateur Radio, not Amateur Computer.

You're right in that very few of us grab an iron and dive headfirst into our new Yaewood Kencom XLRG5000, but have you looked recently at the electronics under the hood of a new car? And the hot rodders among us who like to/dream of build(ing) our own are learning to adapt OEM/aftermarket computer controlled fuel injection systems instead of just slapping a trio of 40+ year old Stromberg 97s atop that small block. There is room for the build-your-own type in our hobby - so what if it isn't as complex as the new top-of-the-line whatever. Lets see you build a Lamborghini in your basement.

The "information superhighway" bears resemblance to the interstate system - it doesn't go everywhere, sure there's a lot on it - but I got my license to be able to talk to others around the world (albeit that I mostly talk with my fingers). If I want to talk to a machine, Ill

call my dad's house & talk to his answering machine.

Now lets look real hard at that photo you refer to in QST. That computer the gent is using? Check the screen and printout - hes designing a yagi antenna!! Those "complex powerful digital techniques" etc etc are being used to design an item to improve radio transmission. They're not being used as the end to the means - they're a means to an end which is radio!

Regarding "simple error-prone CW": A) Its just as easy to hit a wrong key as it is to slip in an extra dit B) Whose errors? If they're yours, then practice!

"Effective statement of policy. A pool of trained computer ops...can touchtype a computer keyboard...practical experience in networking...familiar with software and hardware...that will take care of 97.1". Please excuse my while I barf. Give me someone who can tap out CW on two wires when the genius hacker spills his diet Perrier into the keyboard and has converted the mic into a modem. Give me someone whose experience in networking consists of intelligibly and simply getting a message across. Computer literacy does not equal intelligible and intelligent communication. 97.1 begins and ends with sections that refer to serving your fellow human being, computer BBSs, message boxes, and mail drops are nice, but they are merely storage devices - the basic idea is people talking to people.

When packet radio came out it was hailed as the savior of our hobby. Tell me something - when was the last time you made a real-time packet QSO? People are social animals - I find it difficult to establish a meaningful relationship with a BBS, computers, digital techniques, multi-megabyte-capable fiber optic cables and the like will not "save" our hobby, people talking to people in real time, whether across town or across the globe, will save it. What will doom it, however, is the attitude that "it aint new, so its no good - throw it out".

One of the most powerful statements Ive ever read goes like this: "If you don't feel the commitment, you almost have the obligation be gone by sundown." Lumpy, get it together - otherwise, its been real know-in ya. If you can't be part of the solution, quit being part of the problem!!

Charlie **KABOQF**

(and that is my real name and call)

**KELLOGGS and S.O.S.**

Has everyone seen the cute SOS soap pad commercial? The dirty pots and pans are clanging out three dits, then three dahs, then three dits! The SOS manufacturers must have confidence that Morse is readily recognizable to most TV viewers!

Kelloggs Corn Pops is offering a Signal Flashlight as a premium for buying the cereal. While we commend Kelloggs for helping introduce code to youngsters as a fun thing to do, we wish they would use International Morse instead of the American Morse as an example on the cereal box! If you want to drop em a note, its Kellogg USA, Inc, Battlecreek MI 49016.



Thursdays at 8:30 EST on 28.350MHz, there is a new code practice net, out of Wilmington Ohio. Contact person is Harry KB8UJN.

Empire Slow Speed Traffic/Training Net meets daily on 3.590KHz at 6pm local time Pete W2WSS welcomes all!

Sunday QSO Party at 2100Z on 14.058, NCS KC4UUG

Saturday QSO Party 1500Z on 14.058, NCS NP2GP

Is there any interest in a 80 meter Slow Speed practice net/party? It has been suggested that it meet 5 KHz down from the top of the Novice band, around 3.745 +/-2 for QRM. So far, we don't have a firm commitment for a Net Control Station, but maybe Charlie KA8OQF could be persuaded to put a CQ FISTS out and see if there is any activity? How about trying Wednesday evening at 0100Z? If you're listening and don't hear anything, give a shout yourself! This is for the slow speeders, so please keep it under 13 wpm.

There have been comments that during the QSO parties, some of us aren't keeping to the philosophy of 'the speed of the fleet is the speed of the slowest ship'. Altho it might be frustrating to have to 'turn down the wick', I am afraid that the higher speeds heard on the QSO parties are scaring away prospective check-ins. Save it for the High Speed Nets (don't have one? START ONE!). We want to encourage everyone to join in the parties, regardless of their proficiency level. Let's try to be more in keeping with the FISTS philosophy and use a sending speed that is copyable by all on the net.

### N.A. FISTS QSL BUREAU

John N8FU, 4441 Andreas Ave, Cincinnati OH 45211

The QSL Bureau is working nicely. All you have to do is provide me with a SASE with the new postage rate of 32 cents. Canadians please attach US postage 40 cents or include an IRC. The postage rate to Canada is not affected by the rate increase.

At year's end I sent out all cards that I had SASE on file for. I have the following QSLs for FISTS members but NO SASE on hand. You have one QSL on hand unless there is a number in parenthesis after your call-sign, which shows the amount of cards waiting for you.

W1CFZ (2)	N3PM(2)	KA8OQF
KZ1H	KC3QC	W8PBO
WV1T(3)	KQ4CQ(2)	N8TFR(3)
WB1U	AB4KL	W8ZNH
NC2B	N4VEF	K9QVB
N2PLE	KB5HRS	W9S(2)
KY2R	K5XK	WA0FGV
K2SWZ	WU6Q(3)	AA0IQ
W2WOE	K6UBC	VE2GOO
N3NNH(2)	N8KXY(2)	VE3WNS
KE3NV	W8LHG	VE3ZBB(2)

Hope to hear from you soon. 73, John N8FU

This is from John N5ZYR, relating a funny but true story:

"During field day of 1992 I had taken a keyer I had made to show to some of the other hams at the site. One of the hams was involved with the upcoming hamfest and asked if I could donate one of the keyers for a grand prize for a CW fast copy contest. I agreed to make another and to deliver it to him ASAP. Well, the hamfest came and went and I still had not made another keyer so I gave mine to my friend to give to the winner of the contest. Good thing hams are used to waiting for things (ie: DX QSL cards, that first call sign, that fancy new HT that may come from Santa any time now, etc!) I was three months late in getting the keyer delivered! I was glad that my friend was the one who gave the winner his prize and I didn't have to explain to him why I was so late.....or so I thought!

On Dec 9, 1992, after many hours of listening to CCW and lots of encouragement from my new ham friend Pete KB5HRS, I gave an attempt at my first CW contact and QSO! Of course I chose to try this with Pete because he was local and I knew that he would be the most understanding if I got nervous and had to QRT! But I did OK at my copy other than when he was telling me about the key he was using. After signing off (and drying my palms!) I called Pete on the phone and asked him what he was trying to tell me about his key? He said that he was using a key that he had won at the hamfest and he had just received it, three months late! I then began to describe the key to him in great detail to his astonishment! We both had a big laugh, and I had some explaining to do, as we realized that the keyer Pete had used, and the one he was trying to tell me about in my first CW contact, was the keyer I had made!"

FB John and Pete! Cute story! And I am glad you understand about being patient because I received this letter back in September and it's taken me three months to print it!!

## The Insect Filter

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## Sunday QSO Party Report

November 6

No party today, sweepstakes contest in progress

November 13

The usual noise and weak signals, with the outskirts of tropical storm Gordon to add spice.

CHECK-INS: NP2GP, KD4EWC, WA2OVT, N2NTO, KD4FLO, N4VEF, N8FU, KS4DX, K9VKKY, KC4OCS

November 20

Weak signals, QSB, and rapid skip changes

CHECK-INS: NP2GP, N4VEF, KG8DA/5, KE3NV, VY2RB, KD4FLO, VP2VI

November 27

No party today, CQ magazine DX contest in progress

## FISTS In Paradise Party

The Second Annual FISTS in Paradise Party will take place some weekend near the end of February. Klaus **KP2O**, Greg **NP2GQ**, Maggie **NP2GP** and Don **KC4UUG** plan to sail Maggie's boat over to Culebra Island (about half way between St Thomas and Puerto Rico) and hold a Sunday party from there. If they can, they will also involve Debbie **NP2DJ** and Bob **VP2VI**. They will be signing /KP4/mm. More about this next month! If you have plans that take you to that part of the globe, give Maggie **NP2GP** or Don **KC4UUG** a call. February is the perfect time of the year for a weekend of tropical island activating! Keep us posted as the plans materialize, guys!

## WA4OSR is Vibroplex!

FISTS member Mitch **WA4OSR** has acquired the Vibroplex Co. Inc! Mitch is the first ham to own the Vibroplex Co. He will be moving all of its operation back to the south, where its roots began. All current Vibroplex products, including the Original bug, the lam-bic, the Vibrokeyer, and the Brass Racer keys will continue to be produced.

Mitch says "The Vibroplex name is older than amateur radio and has come to represent the one piece of equipment in the ham shack that symbolizes the interest, camaraderie, and esprit de corps of the worldwide ham radio community. Even in this age of electronics, the heritage of Vibroplex has been passed down from generation to generation in the service of professional and amateur radio operators who demand quality. I intend to continue the unmatched Vibroplex quality, feel, simplicity, and performance." And Mitch adds, "...be watching for some new, exciting products from Vibroplex in the near future."

The new address of Vibroplex is 11 Midtown Park, E, Mobile AL 36606-4141. The 1-800 number is 840-8873. Many congrats Mitch! If you need Field Testers for the new products, you know how to find me and I think we could twist some other FISTS arms, hi!!

DecJan95

## Looking for Practice

Eric **KC5JEV** (General class) is interested in a regular scheduled contact to help him improve.

Barry **KA2OYF** would like to participate in a Novice Net, but until we get one going, I bet he wouldn't mind having a sked to help him get his speed up.

Gordon **KJ5BN** can head copy at 25 wpm and wants to sked with someone who can go faster to push him to work harder. He's almost up to 30 and needs that "push"!

If you are interested in helping these guys out, drop them a note (Maybe via the traffic service!!). Or let me know and I'll get you in touch with each other.

## Callbooks

Just in case this Keynote gets to you in time to take advantage of this offer, I thought I will include it! George **N2CG** has been selling the Callbook for the last 18 years and he has the best prices in town.

The 1995 NA Callbook (\$35 list) is \$25.50

The 1995 International (\$35 list) is also \$25.50

The 1995 World Radio TV Handbook (\$24.95 list) is available for \$18.00. There is additional charge for shipping/handling.

The offer normally expires on Jan 7, but if you give him a call he can extend it for a little extra time.

If a group wanted to pool orders, you can save on shipping. For example, for a flat fee of \$12, up to 12 books can be shipped to a SINGLE ADDRESS.

George's phone number is (201) 843-5130 and his address is George Hall **N2CG**, 18 Miller St, Saddle Brook NJ 07663-5405.

**Code is not CW**

*This was sent to us by new FISTS member Bill **W6DDP** with permission to reprint it. What do you think of it?*

Initially, the only means of communicating by radio was by radiotelegraphy and that was accomplished by using the spark system. The spark transmission system involved dits and dahs which built up to the maximum value at the start and tapered down to zero at the end of each dit and dah. In other words, the dits and dahs were not of constant amplitude. The subsequent development and use of transmitting tubes resulted in dits and dahs being transmitted at constant amplitudes. These newer emissions were called interrupted continuous wave (ICW). Actually, it was no emission interrupted by periods of continuous wave outputs when dits and dahs were transmitted.

Modulated continuous wave (MCW/A2A) later was used in two forms. In one system, the modulating tone (usually 400 or 1kHz) was superimposed on a continuous wave which remained on while in the transmit mode. In the other system, the carrier is turned on and off with the modulating tone. Both of these systems are called MCW, and they remain legal on 50.1-54.0 and 144.1-148MHz. They are also

legal (per FCC 97.65b) whenever code practice, in accordance with the FCC 97.91d, is conducted in bands authorized for A3 emissions.

Continuous wave (CW) is N0N. The first letter N represents the emission of an unmodulated carrier. The number zero represents no modulating signal. The second letter N represents no information transmitted. In other words, if you hold a key down with the transmitter on, you are transmitting CW(N0N)

However, if you turn the carrier on and off, which is what happens when one ends Morse Code, you are transmitting an A1A emission. The first letter A represents a double side band emission. The numeral one represents a single channel containing quantized or digital information without the use of a modulated sub-carrier (excluding time-division multiplex.) The second letter A represents telegraphy for reception by ear.

When amateurs use Morse Code on the air, we are usually transmitting an A1A emission, which is ICW. As is previously covered, my may also use A2A, which is now MCW.

The ARRL handbooks tiptoes around the incorrect use of CW (as meaning A1A Morse Code) like the governor of Texas talking about the greatest little whorehouse. It states that telegraphy by On-Off Keying (OOK) of a carrier is also known as CW, which is used by amateurs to mean OOK telegraphy by Morse Code. It admits that other parts of the industry use CW (correctly) to signify an unmodulated continuous wave carrier

Another term which correctly applies to OOK (A1A) Code emissions is Amplitude-Shift Keying (ASK, but this term is not popular with amateurs

If you want to transmit CW, just keep the key closed. If you want to transmit OOK/ASK (A1A; ICW let the key up between the dits and dahs.

Bill W6DDP has quite a few a books and things for sale. Among these are about 350 pages of licensing course printed hand outs for \$11 plus \$4 shipping. For \$30/set he has code practice cassette tapes you from zero to about 13 - 15 tapes in a set. There is much more, but I hesitate to print it all since I recvd this list a couple months ago. For a new list of what Bill is offering send a SASE to Bill Welsh 45527 3rd Street, Lancaster CA 93535.

#### MORSUM MAGNIFICAT MAGAZINE

*Of interest to all C.W. operators, veterans or novice, This unique bi-monthly magazine provides an invaluable source of interest, reference and record relating to the traditions and practice of Morse. Bypostal subscription only. Sample copy \$3.00 and further details from:*

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## ARRL Straight Key Night

What a terrific way to start off the new year! Meeting new friends on CW, with a new straight key to boot! The folks at WBL Design kept their promise and delivered my new SideKey 3 days before SKN. They even phoned me later to make sure it arrived, which really impressed me.

The key is a joy to operate, easy to adjust and very smooth. And its design makes it a real conversation piece in the shack! The key itself is mounted on the SIDE (hence the name, hi) of the base, rather than the traditional on top of the base design. I showed it to **N8IAG** and he expressed some doubts about its stability on the table while sending. I didnt have any problem with it, but if you like to pound away with a VERY heavy fist you might want to fasten it a board or the table for better stability. But I ragchewed away with it for 3 hours straight on New Years eve and have nothing but praise for it. I also bought the single lever paddle, but havent had the time to put this thru the paces yet.

John WB9CIS is another FISTS who really puts his heart and soul into the SKN experience! He worked 11 stations, and here is his SKN story:

This was my fifth SKN, 5 in a row. I ran it mobile two years ago. This year, I again QSOed with Art **W0YFZ** from MN. We met two years ago on SKN at almost the same time and frequency!

Each year, SKN has been fun it its own way, from comparing one rig to another, to trying different antennas. This year I tried an shortened dipole for the low end of 80 meters, a "real" dipole cut for 3.570 is about 131 feet. My shortened one is about 95 feet. It worked very well.

Most of the fists I heard were very good, as well as the QSOs. But one in particular was Paul **N8XMS**. I had lots of fun with him. He had a very good fist, also. He mentioned a QSO he had with a YL who was wearing gloves because it was cold where she was camping! I came back... "well, shes just practicing safe CW Hi Hi!"

Thanks for the report **CIS**, wonder what you are going to do for next years SKN, it will be hard to top the year you went mobile just for the occasion!

## MI QSO Party

Many congrats to Ian **N8TFR** for winning Lapeer county and coming in 3rd in the state!! NEXT YEAR, IAN...

Just had a thought! We have a LOT of MI FISTS, maybe we can combine our scores and enter as a club...

## FISTS Traffic Training Net

I just got word from Pete **K8OUA** that a FISTS slow speed traffic training net is in the works! Next month watch for details. I hope you all take advantage of this and it is a big success. There has been a lot of intertest generated by Petes articles! Thanks Pete!

## Novice Round-Up

Here is a topic that is near and dear to the hearts of many FISTS members, myself included. It was the first contest most of us participated in. I credit it with my ability to increase my CW speed in a relatively short length of time, as well as whet my appetite for contesting.

We saw in QST that it may very well be the last Novice Round-Up, due to lack of participation. As you realize, that is a very sad commentary on the state of CW in the Novice Ranks!

This is an opportunity for Novice/Techs, as well as the others who may not have had exposure to contesting to find out that CW can be a lot of fun. It is also a great way to work toward your WAS, or county /prefix collecting.

I would like to ask my fellow FISTS to please make a special effort to get on the Novice bands and make a few contacts. Set aside 15 minutes a day, a half hour if you can spare it, and give the Novices some contacts. If this is to be the last Novice Round-Up, let's see it go with a bang!

To the Novices/Techs in FISTS, the ball is in your court! I know it's scary, but jump in there, find a quiet spot on the band and put out a CQ NR! I promise you will be so proud of the way your code speed increases and your confidence will build. If there is a good turn-out for NR, I bet the ARRL will continue the NR. It would be a very sad blow to CW if they cancel this traditional get-your-feet-wet opportunity.

Most importantly, SEND IN YOUR LOGS TO THE ARRL. This is the only way you can prove to them that you participated and think NR is important.

### More Slow Speed Net Info

Bob **KC5DUI** is taking the initiative and starting up what he calls a "SLOOooww code net". Wednesday nights at 10pm Eastern, 9pm Central, 8pm Mountain and 7pm Pacific time on 7.135/.140 +/- QRM. He wants to keep it casual, and will be calling CQ FISTS, so tune in and toss out your callsign.

Pete **K8OUA** and Vince **AA8HF** have been brainstorming and have decided to try a FISTS traffic net! The details are still to be worked out, but it sounds like a wonderful idea. Maybe future traffic handlers will feel more comfortable starting out with FISTS, how about it **WO8E**? No more excuses! (Is that from a Nike tennis shoe ad? How about that A T and T ad, "KNOW THE CODE". I keep meaning to write them and ask if that is available in poster form!

### Member Lists

Included this month is only a list of the NA members, sorry! I had hoped to have a complete listing ready for you but I am having some trouble getting the software to work in my computer and wasn't able to get the DX list printed out in time. We will try again for next month. I hope this is a help anyway!

DecJan95

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Contact Maurice Small, G0HJC on above numbers.

### Important FISTS vote

If you have been following the "Feedback" sections, you will know that Vince **WB2EZG** is quite active with petitioning the FCC for a return to meaningful standards in the ham radio testing. He, along with other FISTS members, thought we should, as a group, petition the FCC in regard to returning to the old style of CW exam and eliminate the multiple-choice test.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a copy of the proposal they would like you to vote on. **PLEASE** read this carefully and voice your opinion. Also enclosed is a postcard, on which you need to put .20 cents postage to register your vote.

There are many pro and con viewpoints on this subject. Some opinions I have heard are that the M/C exam is OK for Novice but should be eliminated for General/Extra: It lets people who barely know CW to slip through and that further erodes the importance of CW to Ham Radio. Some think that the exam process is nerve wracking enough, and anything we can do to make CW seem less like an obstacle is good. Someone else expressed that the M/C was good for less literate people. I'm sure each FISTS has his/her own opinion and I hope you use this chance to express it. This is the first time NA FISTS has ventured into the political forum, and a lot of you are telling me it's about time! The sky isn't falling yet, but the more CW noise we make, the more secure our place on the band plan is! **SO GET ON THE AIR AND CHAT!! GET ON THE NOVICE BANDS** and give em a friendly QSO. Show the newcomers that CW is FUN!

### FINAL

As a final let me say that I have a strong feeling that 1995 is going to be a banner year for FISTS. We are growing so quickly! The CW preservation movement is growing also, as evidenced by copycat clubs popping up (I have seen 2 so far).

If you have CompuServe, please stop by and post a message, particularly if you have any suggestions for a contest, award or some activity to increase participation on the bands. We all know that the best kept secret is that CW is fun! Let's let the cat out of the bag and share the news! 73/88 and ATGN de Nancy WZ8C